Schizophrenia is a very serious psychological disorder that psychologist still do not fully understand. There are many people researching to find a cure, and even more people hoping for one. Schizophrenia research is done by many different types of people. Psychologists conduct most of the research and testing in labs. They are the ones who are observing people suffering from this disorder and trying to see what types of treatments work best for them. Psychiatrists are also very involved in this type of research, but their main focus is on medications, and how their patients react to each type. Both psychologists and psychiatrists are always trying to find a better treatment option for their patients. There are also many other people, who may not be as involved in the research as psychologists and psychiatrist, but they work very hands on with the patients. There are many different people for this job but some of them include social workers, doctors and nurses, teachers, counselors and therapists. Of course, each of these people is hoping for a better cure to schizophrenia every day so they can help their patients more. The people who want a better cure the most, however, are the people who have to live with this disorder every day; the patients and their families. No one can fully understand what it is like to have the disorder until they actually experience the symptoms. The families of the patients suffer too though, because they become responsible for taking care of the affected family member and it is also hard for them to watch them suffer with this disorder every day. There are so many people searching for a solution to schizophrenia, because there are so many people who desperately need the solution.

It was only recently that researchers discovered types of treatments that were effective and did not have terrible side-effects. Less than 100 years ago if you were diagnosed with schizophrenia you would have been shunned from society and locked away. Patients in mental hospitals were often abused and mistreated, and the types of treatments given to them were very dangerous and sometimes deadly. While this is no longer the case, it took many years to reach a humane way of treating patients. This point was reached when they were finally given medications to help treat their symptoms. Because schizophrenia is a combination of thought, anxiety, and mood disorder, it is very difficult to create a medication that treats all of these symptoms. After many years, research has found a few good medications that are affective at treating the main symptoms of schizophrenia. It is usually not just one pill, however. Patients usually end up taking many combinations of medicine to treat the combinations of symptoms. While this helps treat the symptoms, it does create more problems for the patient.

After many years of research, a few good medications have been found to help treat the symptoms of schizophrenia. With these medications, however, come some unfortunate side effects. Some mild and short term side effects include dry mouth, blurred vision, constipation, drowsiness and dizziness. These side effects usually disappear a few weeks after the person starts treatment. (John M. Grohol, Psy.D.) More serious and long lasting side effects include trouble with muscle control, muscle spasms or cramps in the head and neck, fidgeting or pacing, tremors and shuffling of the feet. (John M. Grohol, Psy.D.) These symptoms may not show up immediately, but they can be long lasting. Even more serious effects include rapid weight gain, heart problems, loss of sex drive and a greater risk of developing diabetes. Living with all of these side effects actually reduces the patient’s life span by twenty years. (Rachel Whitehead) As a result of the side effects, many patients dislike taking their medications and will not take them regularly, or at all. The biggest issue is patients going off their medications without consulting a professional. Patients often go off their medications because they believed they are cured because their symptoms have subsided. They do not want to stay on the medications longer than they have to because of the terrible side effects, so they just stop taking their medicine. This, however, causes their symptoms to return and puts them in danger. Many patients stay in this cycle for many years. Their lives are controlled by schizophrenia and the medications used to treat it.

Schizophrenics feel like their lives are out of control because they do not have the proper tools and support systems to treat their disorder. It is easy to see why many people go on and off their medications many times. Some recent research has been focused on giving schizophrenics tools during treatment so they could be able to control their disorder, while being off their medications. By using group and family therapy to help patients relearn needed social skills I believe that this this type of treatment could be very effective. Some researchers argue that medication is the only effective treatment of schizophrenia but I believe that the use of psychotherapy, along with medications, will prove to be an even better treatment and will allow the patient regain control of their life.